BOWIE, MD – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) today test drove a hydrogen fuel cell car at Walker Pontiac Buick GMC in Bowie. “Hydrogen fuel cells have the tremendous potential to power vehicles without greenhouse gas emissions, one of the leading causes of global warming,” Hoyer said. “Investing in alternative energy sources is important for Maryland’s environment, economy, and security.”

Hoyer drove the HydrogGen3, a hand-made version of a General Motors Opel Zafira, one of the company's European line of vehicles. It is powered by a fuel cell that runs on compressed hydrogen.

In the coming days, Hoyer will introduce the PROGRESS Act, a comprehensive energy bill that would, among other things, establish a New Manhattan Center for High Efficiency Vehicles.

“This effort would revitalize the goals of the Partnership of New Generation of Vehicles from the 1990s to build on current hydrogen and fuel cell work with a focus on battery, advanced diesel and variable compression engines, plug-in electric hybrids, and other vehicle programs,” Hoyer said.

In addition to investing in additional research and development so alternative vehicles can become available at competitive market prices, the PROGRESS Act does the following:

-Establish a National Energy Security Commission.

-Establish a National Biofuels Infrastructure Development Program

-Promote Transit Use & Develop a Rail Infrastructure Program

-Ensure Federal Government Leadership in the Use of Alternatives to Oil

“Gas prices have risen 11 cents in just the last two weeks and Congress continues to rely on a short-sighted drilling only strategy to our energy challenges,” Hoyer said. “To truly achieve energy independence, we must embrace a major national effort to make substantial gains in technology, conservation and vehicle efficiency, and the use of alternative fuels. The PROGRESS Act would do just that.”

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